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4. — *Principles of Social Science.* By H. C. CAREY. Philadelphia. 1858 – 60. 3 vols. 8vo.

A VERY popular mode of philosophizing on social subjects is that well described by Mr. Mill as the Chemical Method. Divested of rhetorical ornament, the bare frame-work of the logic is of some such form as this : In Greece and Italy where they adopted policy A, the good effects E, F, G resulted, while in France and Russia, where they adopt policy B, the evils I, K, and L prevail. Therefore, if you would enjoy these good effects, you must adopt policy A, and avoid policy B. This is as effective a mode of reasoning as the popular orator can adopt, its immediate appeal being to the instinct of self-preservation rather than the reason. As neither reasoning nor examination is necessary to make an infant, who has burnt its fingers on the stove, avoid it months after the fire is out, so most of his hearers will feel afraid of policy B, without inquiring whether it was really the cause of the evil effects pointed out.

The natural effect of this method is to make man the creature of society. Indeed, we might almost say that it consists in viewing man as the creature of society. It views mankind as the chemist views a compound whose properties are to be learned by trial alone. Of individual men, their motives and their springs of action, it knows no more than the chemist knows of the molecular forces which produce the changes he observes.

Herein lies the great defect of the method. We do know a great deal about individual men and their motives. Society being made up of individuals, this knowledge may be very valuable in enabling us to discover or account for social laws. On the other hand, the forces which act in society are so diverse in different countries and ages that the chemical method can scarcely ever lead to any certain result.

The "law of averages" furnishes an excellent illustration of the defect to which we refer. If we collect and count up almost any class of actions of individuals in a community, we shall find them to exhibit a remarkable constancy from month to month and year to year, no matter how accidental and trivial they may seem. As examples, Mr. Buckle cites the number of murders in France, and the number of letters dropped into the London post-office without superscription, in each year. When we see such laws, it is very natural to view them as laws which in some way govern the acts of individuals, or lessen the sphere of individual volition. Neither Buckle nor Quetelet seems entirely free from this idea. But the mathematical theory of probabilities shows that, so far from the law being the result of any cause which limits volition, it is

the necessary result of that individual independence of society which every one is conscious of enjoying; and the more complete this independence of the acts of each individual, the more certainly will the law be carried out. Hence the ratio of undirected or misdirected letters ought to be more constant from year to year than that of crimes.

Were it not for the extent and gravity of the work which we have taken for our text, it might be taken for a burlesque upon the chemical method. The latter is adopted in the beginning, and, with here and there an insignificant exception, adhered to vigorously to the end, regardless of consequences. It is used to prove the political economy of the seventeenth century mainly right, and that of the nineteenth all wrong, and to defend the commercial systems of China and Austria against those of England and America. In his Preface, Mr. Carey expresses the opinion that there exists "but a single system of laws, — those instituted for the government of matter in the form of clay and sand proving to be the same by which that matter was governed when it took the form of man or of communities of men." The natural result is to look upon man the individual as having no more power over his own destiny than the particles of a chemical mixture. Of an animal capable of adapting himself to circumstances, applying means to ends, alive to his own interests, sharp at a bargain, disposed to take time by the forelock, the author seems but in one or two instances to have any conception. His "Man" is a mere puppet dancing about under the influences of forces which he calls "Policy," "Trade," "Centralization," "Individuality," etc. The entire field of human history is surveyed for the purpose of showing the effect of these forces upon him. The protecting hand of government is invoked to legislate into being such forces as tend to make him rich and happy.

That many empirical laws of human action and human progress can thus be discovered, we do not deny. But the mode of operation of these laws, and the causes and limits of their action, can never be discovered by mere observation of society. Every man capable of reflecting upon his own motives is conscious that his acts are not governed by any of the above forces. He works and sells and buys, not in forced obedience to social laws, but for the purpose of gratifying some desire or attaining some end. Looking at his fellow-men, he is irresistibly led to the conclusion that their acts proceed from a similar cause. Now acts caused by the desire to attain an end are necessarily found in mind alone, and can never be exhibited by matter, nor learned by viewing men as moved by laws like those which move matter. Hence they are those to which Mr. Carey's method is least adapted. And nothing is more certain than that all the acts of man in the pursuit of wealth pro-

ceed from this cause. Hence we may expect truth in our author's social science only when he leaves the domain of political economy, which is really his main subject, or limits the application of his philosophy by the rules of good sense. How far he does this may be judged by a few examples first of his doctrines and then of his reasoning.

One doctrine is, that man tends "of necessity" to gravitate toward his fellow-men, and the greater the number collected in a given space, the greater is the attractive force there exerted, as is now seen in Paris and London, New York and Boston. Gravitation is here, as in the material world, in the direct ratio of the mass, and in the inverse one of the distance. London and Paris may be regarded as the rival suns of our system, each exercising a strong attractive force; and were it not for the counter attractions of local centres like Vienna and Berlin, Madrid and Lisbon, Europe would present to view one great centralized system, the population of which would be always tending toward those two cities, there to make their exchanges and there to receive their laws, and all the members of the human family would finally tend to come together on a single spot of earth.

We claim that the reason why the human race do not congregate at London and Paris is, that they have too much good sense. Mr. Carey asserts that it is the attraction of Berlin, Vienna, etc. Herein lies the difference of our views of human nature and methods of philosophizing.

The great foe of human progress, according to Mr. Carey, is trade, the ally of war to prevent the spread of civilization. "Trade," says our author in his table of contents, "tends towards centralization, and towards disturbance of the public peace, — war and trade regard man as the instrument to be used." "Soldiers and traders always in alliance with each other." "War and trade the characteristics of the early period of society." "Necessity for the services of the warrior and the trader diminishes with the growth of wealth and population." "Close connection between war and trade visible in every page of history." "The richer soils abandoned in all the countries in which war or trade obtains the mastery over commerce." In another place we find that, half a century since, India exported cotton cloth to all the world. "Trade, however, subsequently carried the day, compelling its unhappy subjects to the free importation of cotton cloth from Europe."

But by what agency did trade "compel its unhappy subjects"? Had the latter no free-will, — no power of self-defence? This is the great mystery which our author does not attempt to solve. His most specific allegation against the trader, an allegation which he repeats at least six times in the course of thirty-nine pages,\* is, that "he buys men

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\* Vol. I. pp. 209, 210, 215, 218, 235, 248.

and merchandise when and where they are cheap, and sells them when and where they are dear." Now we had really supposed that "buying things when and where they were cheap, and selling them when and where they were dear," was a general characteristic of the human race. Nay, more, we supposed that, buying where goods were cheap, the trader bought where money was wanted most and the goods wanted least; and that, selling when and where they were dear, he sold just when and where they were most wanted, so that he advanced the public good by consulting his own. If Mr. Carey is right, we trust an act will speedily be passed by Congress requiring every one to buy his groceries when and where they are dear, and to sell his own goods to the lowest bidder.

In fine, Mr. Carey's theory of trade and traders is all incomprehensible, except the conclusion, which is, that international trade should be in great part suppressed by act of Congress.

Yet another mysterious conclusion is that the border-ruffian outrages in Kansas, and every other infraction of public law in our country during the ten years preceding the Rebellion, were the result of our abandoning the protective policy. As the paragraph is a fair specimen of half the reasoning in the work, we present it in full.

"Freedom and peace come with the growing power of a government to rely upon direct and honest application to the people for the means required for its support. Declining freedom among the people and war among the nations are the companions of growing centralization and indirect taxation. How far the truth of this is proved by American experience is seen in the facts, that thirty years since, when the policy of the country tended towards the creation of domestic markets for the farmer, towards increasing the value of labor and land, towards entire freedom of intercourse abroad and at home as a consequence of protection, and towards the ultimate substitution of direct for indirect taxation, the public expenditures but little exceeded \$10,000,000. Fleets and armies then required only \$ 6,000,000, — peace with all nations, as a consequence of respect for the rights of all, being then the habitual condition of the country. Ten years later, trade having meantime been adopted as the policy of the country, the expenditures for fleets and armies had been already tripled. Five years later, the policy of peace and commerce having for the moment been readopted, the expenditure for military purposes fell to \$12,000,000. Since then, trade having been, to all appearance, finally adopted as the policy of the country, the cost of army and navy has risen to \$ 30,000,000; and the results are seen in a perpetual succession of foreign and domestic wars. The sister republic of Mexico has been invaded and dismembered. Cuba has been attempted. Greytown has been destroyed. Japan has been visited and threatened. Chinese forts have been destroyed. Indian tribes have been annihilated. Civil war has raged in Kansas, and vigilance committees have governed California. Preparatory to further wars, expeditions have been fitted out for the exploration of Afri-

can and South American rivers, while expensive missions have been sent to Persia, China, and other countries."— Chap. XLIV. § 8.

Those who have previously applied the chemical method to the investigation of social problems, even while ignoring the true chain of cause and effect, have usually tested their conclusions, if not their methods, by their agreement with common sense. But Mr. Carey interchanges cause and effect, not only where their relation is intricate, but where it is obvious to any one who can think at all. We shall give two instances, not on account of their intrinsic importance, but because their logic is of a kind which is poured forth in this and every other free country, from the press, the rostrum, and the senate.

Referring to the causes of the increase of capital, he says:—

"We are told, however, and from high authority, that 'it is only by means of saving that fortunes are created or increased,'—a distinguished English economist confidently assuring us that 'all capital is the product of saving, that is, of abstinence from present consumption for the sake of a future good'; and that consequently 'the increase of capital must depend upon two things,—the amount of the fund from which saving can be made, and the strength of the dispositions which prompt to it.'"

This statement is so obvious, that we should expect every one to accede to it at once. That Robinson Crusoe could make his first wooden plough only through abstaining from the comforts or pleasures he might have commanded while engaged in making it, and that the object of this abstinence was only a future good, since he would reap no benefit from his plough till his crop was grown; that in civilized society a mill or a railroad can be built or a mine dug only by saving money and materials to purchase the labor of making or digging, and that the object of this saving can be attained only after the lapse of years; that the people of Boston would never have spent millions to bring the Cochituate water to their city, had they not been willing to abstain from the immediate enjoyment those millions might afford them for the sake of having plenty of water in future years; and that consequently the plough, the mill, the railroad, and the aqueduct are all the result of abstinence from present consumption for the sake of a future good,—all this is so transparent that no ordinary mind would think of disputing it. But Mr. Carey does vehemently dispute it, and on grounds as strange as the fact itself. We should naturally expect him to show in what our mistake consisted. But no, he runs off to Ireland, India, and Lapland to disprove the proposition. If this be so, he argues, we shall find that in India, Ireland, and Lapland, where saving is most practised, there capital will increase most rapidly.

Here is a new logic.

"If people want capital, they must save," says Mr. Mill.

"The people of Ireland and India save," replies Mr. Carey, "therefore, according to you, they must increase their capital."

Why did not Mr. Carey write us a Logic? He would have made as great havoc with the modern theory of dependent propositions, and the modern doctrines of induction, as he has with the modern political economy. He would have revolutionized other sciences, medicine, for example, as well as social science. "Quinine tends to prevent and cure intermittent fever," say the physicians. "If this be really so," replies the new logic, "where men use most quinine, there we shall find least intermittent fever. But, looking over the country, we find the facts directly opposed to the medical theory. In the swamps of Michigan, the low lands near the Mississippi, and the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, where people use most quinine, there we find most intermittent fever. Nay, more, we find the disease invariably following any extraordinary importation of quinine into those regions. In August and September of every year there is a flow of quinine thither, and the result is always seen in the breaking out of intermittent fever in October. So far from tending to prevent it, quinine, therefore, tends to produce it."

Most people would say that pouring water into a barrel tends to fill it. But if we look at a set of men pouring water into barrels, we shall see that the barrels into which they are pouring no water are the full ones, while those into which water is being poured are comparatively empty. From this fact, the chemical method concludes that pouring water into barrels tends to make them empty. To precisely such a conclusion does Mr. Carey come when he maintains that, the more gold you bring into a country, the more valuable you make it. Every one knows that in England and India, where a great deal of gold is used in the arts and none produced, that metal is necessarily more valuable than in California and Australia, where a great deal more is produced than is consumed, and that, in consequence of this inequality, gold flows from the latter countries to the former. In the table of contents of the second volume, Mr. Carey gives the following analysis of his way of disproving the erroneous notion that a flow of gold into a country tends to diminish its value, and therefore (gold being the standard of value) to increase the price of all other commodities:—"Economists assert that the only effect of an influx of the precious metals is that of rendering a country a good place to sell in, but a bad one in which to buy. That theory is contradicted by all the facts of history, the direct tendency of such influx having, and that invariably, been that of re-

ducing the prices of the finished commodities required by those who have gold and silver for sale." (Chap. XXXI. § 8.)

That is, the more gold flows into a country, the less you will have to give for a barrel of flour, a suit of clothes, or any other "finished commodity"! If gold became so plenty that we could pick it up in the streets, we suppose flour ought, by the new theory, to fall to one dollar per barrel.

Such are the grounds on which we find the commercial system of the seventeenth century maintained against the free-trade ideas of the nineteenth.

The chemical rule for getting rich is extremely simple. It looks over the world and back into history to learn what phenomena accompany wealth. It then assumes that the artificial production of these phenomena in our country will necessarily result in increased wealth and diversity of industry. The finer manufactures always mark wealthy and populous nations. Hence it advocates such restrictions on trade as tend to produce diversity of industry as a means of increasing wealth. By the same reasoning the inhabitants of Pike's Peak ought to build marble palaces and encourage the fine arts, because these invariably precede the highest stage of wealth and civilization. Did the manufactures, and they alone, cause the wealth? Or were wealth, manufactures, and diversity of industry all part of the regular and natural growth of the country, each new employment appearing just when it was wanted for the public good? This question the chemical method can never answer.

Let us not be understood as condemning every application of the method in question. It is indeed rude and imperfect; but our knowledge of human nature is also in many points too rude and imperfect for the application of superior methods. We have already indicated the conditions which limit its action. In the investigation of those laws of human progress and of the formation of character which are not the result of design, it may, to a limited extent, serve both as the basis of our investigations and the final test of our conclusions. We may say, as a general rule, that all those causes which make man what he is come under this category.

But, man as he is being known as an element of the problem, the method is no longer applicable. Man is surrounded by difficulties to be overcome and evils to be avoided. A great part of his works are designed to surmount the difficulties and avoid the evils. The social chemist, looking upon mankind, sees the evils, and the works designed to prevent or remove them, as invariably coexistent phenomena. He seeks a lesson from this relation of cause and effect. The conclusion



will be, either, (1.) that the works are the cause of the evils, and therefore to be discouraged; or, (2.) that the evils are the cause of the works, and therefore to be encouraged in order that the latter may be as effective as possible. Mr. Carey's protection theory is of the latter class. Reduced to a syllogistic form it stands thus:—

The nearer the producer and consumer, and the greater the diversity of industry in a community, the more perfectly will the wants of the community be satisfied.

But the more perfectly you cut off the foreign supply, the greater will be the diversity within, and the nearer will be the producer and consumer.

Therefore, the more perfectly you cut off the foreign supply, the more perfectly will the wants of the community be satisfied.

Which is exactly parallel to,

The thicker men build their houses, the warmer they will be.

But the colder you make the climate, the thicker they will build their houses.

Therefore, the colder you make the climate, the warmer they will be.

Mr. Carey's work is principally valuable as an example of the possible aberrations of the human intellect, and of the absurdity of the popular method he adopts when applied to questions of practical statesmanship.

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5. — *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border. Comprising Descriptions of the Indian Nomads of the Plains; Explorations of New Territory; a Trip across the Rocky Mountains in the Winter; Descriptions of the Habits of different Animals found in the West, and the Methods of hunting them; with Incidents in the Lives of different Frontier Men, &c., &c.* By Colonel R. B. MARCY, U. S. A., Author of "The Prairie Traveller." With Numerous Illustrations. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1866. 8vo. pp. 442.

COLONEL MARCY does not belong to that class of Western travelers of whom we have had so much in books ostensibly or occultly fictitious. He is neither able to follow blindfold the bewildering trail of the Camanche and Kickapoo, nor is he accustomed to put a dozen pistol bullets into the centre of a playing-card, held up by his most intimate friends, before breakfast every morning, as we in the less excited East take an early walk. He knew Captain Martin Scott, and yet no coon ever surrendered at the sound of his name. Being an educated army officer, he knows the value of a subdued style; and though occasionally speaking of himself with a freedom which is, to say the least, a little